



**National Children's Center**  
for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**September 30, 2012 – September 29, 2013**

NIOSH: U54 OH009568-05

Submitted by:

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February 14, 2014

## SECTION I: Center Overview

### Center's Summary

The National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (Center) has enjoyed a long history of developing, testing and sustaining projects associated with children who live on, work on, and visit farms and ranches across the U.S. Unlike the regional NIOSH Agricultural Centers, this Center has a national focus with a national network of partners and project collaborators. Funded since 1997, the Center has a major emphasis on national leadership and on knowledge mobilization (research to practice) activities.

### Relevance

Several of our Center's initiatives have evolved into enduring programs and we feel obliged to maintain and enhance these endeavors. Most notably, the Center remains the "hub" for safety guidelines associated with youth working on family farms, youth employed for agricultural work, children playing on farms, safe agritourism operations, and media/journalist relations.

### Key Personnel:

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Center Web Link: <http://marshfieldclinic.org/nccrahs/>

## **SECTION II: Highlights of Projects with High Impact**

### **Stakeholder Communication**

**Project Description:** Our Center serves as a media communications hub with strong links to agricultural print, radio and television reporters. Press releases inform the public of updated statistics on child ag injuries as well as new resources for injury prevention. Individuals and organizations across all 50 states interact with NCCRAHS staff, seeking consultation for educational resources, programs and referrals. Newsletters and social media posts provide frequent points of contact with public and professional audiences. Topics of keen interest include: safety for agritourism operations, safe play areas on farms, work guidelines for family farm youth and guidance of employers of hired teen workers.

#### **Outputs and Impact:**

Notable impacts (in addition to presentations, publications) with various stakeholders included:

- Endorsement of our Center's print and website resources on agritourism safety by the national agritourism association (North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association)
- Grant awarded to conduct two agritourism safety workshops in Tennessee
- Completion of a 5-year project with U of Iowa to promote safe play areas on farms with dissemination of results underway
- Representatives of the North American Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC - agricultural insurers) expressed interest in partnering with NCCRAHS to develop safety guidelines for children at play or young visitors that agents would use when insuring farm clients.

### **Childhood Agricultural Safety Network**

**Project Description:** For 15 years our Center has coordinated efforts of the Childhood Agricultural Safety Network (CASN), a coalition of organizations that include projects associated with youth, agriculture, safety and health. CASN members communicate with each other about timely issues, e.g. changes in child labor in agriculture regulations, and oftentimes collaborate with each other on education and outreach endeavors. For the past eight years, CASN members have developed and distributed a wall calendar with child safety messages pertinent to farm parents and agricultural employers.

**Outputs and Impact:** One in-person meeting and three teleconferences enabled CASN members to unite in their efforts to safeguard children on farms.

CASN accomplishments included:

- Distributed more than 6,000 calendars (Year 2014)
- Increased membership to 38 organizations
- Assisted with activating the "Blueprint for Protecting Children in Agriculture"
- Assisted with dissemination of information on the aftermath of the proposed/withdrawn child labor laws
- Shared and posted news clippings of child ag injuries and deaths

## **Youth at Work Guidelines**

**Project Description:** Originally released in 1999, the North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) have become an enduring resource that is widely referenced when assigning work to children on family farms. Our Center maintains responsibility for maintaining and updating these guidelines and ensuring that they are easily accessed by parents and youth safety advocates. During 2013 the Center's priorities were to update the guidelines related to youth tractor operations and to promote availability of NAGCAT and the related guidelines for hired adolescent farmworkers on a user-friendly website. Working with an agricultural marketing firm, a strategy was pilot tested to motivate farm parents to read and download resources from the newly created Cultivate Safety website.

**Outputs and Impact:** Although this project is still considered in an early phase, several notable outcomes are noted from this year's work:

- Created and disseminated "Parent First. Farmer Second" public service campaign with three print ads that were run in agricultural/trade magazines, newspapers, and websites (in Wisconsin for pilot phase)
- A new website, [www.cultivatesafety.org](http://www.cultivatesafety.org) encourages parents to understand child development issues (via video) with respect to agricultural hazards. Additional information includes age-relevant work and risks, news clippings of recent childhood agricultural injuries/deaths, previously developed work guidelines and the updated youth tractor guidelines.
- The "Parent First. Farmer Second" print advertisement and radio messages won regional and national awards from the National Agricultural Marketing Association (NAMA) and the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB).
- Print and radio resources were distributed via jump drives at the National Association of Farm Broadcasters and preliminary follow up indicates that many of the recipients have aired the radio messages across the U.S.

## **Operationalizing the 2012 National Action Plan at the North American Agricultural Safety Summit of September 2013**

**Project Description:** The Blueprint for Protecting Children in Agriculture, 2012 National Action Plan was originally released in April of 2012. At that time, there was a national conversation underway regarding the proposed updates, then subsequent withdrawal of federal Child Labor in Agriculture Regulations. The public confusion and animosity over the child labor regulations issue generated relative lack of interest in a federally-funded action for safeguarding children on farms. Thus, the strategies for promoting the updated "Blueprint" were postponed and integrated with the 2013 North American Agricultural Safety Summit, held in September, hosted by the Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America (ASHCA) with support from NIOSH through our Center which was charged with ensuring that child-related issues would be addressed at this national venue.

**Outputs and Impact:** The 2013 Ag Safety Summit, with 250 attendees and 33 partner organizations was successful in achieving its desired outcomes, including a solid representation of child-related issues:

- Of the Summit posters/abstracts 13 (18% of total) represented child-related issues in agriculture
- One of the 10 (10%) plenary sessions addressed children, specifically safeguarding children of migrant and seasonal farm workers.
- Three new topics were prepped by our teams and presented at the Summit, including: voluntary certification systems' effects on child laborers; drafting an agricultural employers' associations model policy for training and supervising adolescent workers; and assessing factors contributing to model child care services for migrant and seasonal farm worker families. Two of these initiatives are moving into an enhanced implementation phase with support from agricultural employers.
- A dedicated issue of *Journal of Agromedicine* will be released in April 2014 with the 13 child-related abstracts and several full manuscripts.

### **National Leadership**

With a number of new national initiatives underway at other sites, NCCRAHS representatives are invited "to the table" to weigh in on strategies for protecting children from agricultural disease and injury. These include the "Safe Agricultural Youth" USDA-funded initiative led by Penn State, the National Tractor Safety Project led by the New York Agricultural Research Center, and the Grain Handling Safety Coalition.

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